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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production and Marketing Administration
State College, New Mexico

4-1-49
NO. 339

NEW MEXICO

WEEKLY FARM PROGRAM NEWS

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WINTER WHEAT PROSPECTS GOOD - Continuing favorable prospects for the winter wheat crop as indicated by the March report of the U. S. Department of Agriculture are being watched by farmers as an indication of the amount of storage space needed, says (full name) of the (county) Agricultural Conservation Committee.

Winter wheat is the first large crop that will have to be stored this season, the chairman states. It ordinarily makes up about 75 percent of the total wheat crop of this country. If the winter wheat crop is large, it will require a substantial part of the storage now being used by the carryover from last year's large crops. That in turn will mean that additional storage will have to be provided for spring wheat, other small grains and for the corn crop.

Farmers reported plans to increase their acreage of spring wheat this year will add to the problem. Reported planting intentions as of March 1 indicate 20,300,000 acres of spring wheat, an increase of 3.6 percent over 1948.

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SMALLER FEED CROP ACREAGE IN PROSPECT - Acreage prospects for 1949, reported by the Department of Agriculture on March 21, indicate the smallest total acreage of spring-planted crops since before the war. The greatest decline in spring plantings will be in feed grains, with smaller declines in oilseeds -- soybeans, flaxseed and peanuts -- and most other row crops. Chief increases over last year are indicated for plantings of spring wheat, dry peas, and tobacco.

Acreage of principal crops may total nearly 361 million acres, about 1.6 million acres less than in 1948, also below the wartime peak in 1943 and 1944, but exceeding the total in any other year since 1937. Much larger total acreages were planted or grown in the 1929-33 period, the top being 375.5 million acres in 1932.

Total acreage in prospect exceeds total crop allotments or suggested goals by

FOREST SERVICE

NEW YORK

TO THE DIRECTOR, FOREST SERVICE, WASHINGTON, D. C.
FROM THE CHIEF, NEW YORK DISTRICT, NEW YORK, N. Y.
SUBJECT: [Illegible]
[Illegible text follows, appearing to be a memorandum or letter discussing forest management, with several lines of text that are mostly illegible due to fading and blurring.]

[Illegible text continues, appearing to be the body of a letter or report, with several paragraphs of text that are mostly illegible due to fading and blurring.]

about 1 percent. By individual crops, prospects fall below goals by from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 19 percent; prospects exceed goals by from 2 to 56 percent.

Corn acreage will be the smallest in more than 50 years. Food grains will be grown on a larger acreage than ever before, with winter wheat planted on a record acreage and abandonment apparently near the low level of recent years. With prospective spring wheat acreage nearly 4 percent more than in 1948, a new record total wheat acreage is in prospect, exceeding that in either of the past 2 years by more than 3.5 million acres.

COWS AND CONSERVATION - When the bins and cribs are full and a farmer is faced with the necessity of adjusting his cropping system, one of the most serious problems is what to do with the acreage taken out of the "excess" crop. If wheat, cotton, corn, tobacco, peanut or other acreage needs to be shifted to some other use, what use?

In discussing this problem, _____, chairman of the (County) ACA Committee, points out that in most cases shifting these acres to some other crop will put that crop in trouble requiring still further adjustments.

If the "diverted" acreages are shifted to grass and legumes, what use will be made of the hay and pasture? The usual answer, according to Mr. _____ is livestock. But, won't the same thing hold true as for crops -- too much livestock?

In answering his own question, Mr. _____ points out that it all depends on how much acreage is shifted to pasture and hay, what use is made of it, and how fast livestock numbers are increased. Currently, the number of livestock units is at a "low" in the livestock cycle.

An analysis by the Livestock Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration shows that since 1900, the total animal grazing units -- the equivalent of an average cow -- have ranged from a low of 67 million units in 1928 to a high of 80 million in 1944. At the present time it is 68 million animal grazing units.

In view of this, Mr. _____ said it would appear that livestock numbers, particularly beef cattle and sheep, can stand at least a moderate increase for the next few years. This, he explains, depends upon continued high purchasing power of the American public.

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1949 WHEAT SUPPORTS TO BE AT 90% - Government support prices for the 1949 crop of

wheat will be at 90 percent of parity, as required by law, Thomas R. Roberts, Member of the State Production and Marketing Administration Committee, said today.

In general, the 1949 wheat support program will be similar to those of the past 2 years, Mr. Roberts explained, except that the supports will be available a month longer -- from time of harvest through January 31, 1950. Methods of support will include (1) farm- and warehouse-storage loans, (2) purchase agreements, and (3) direct purchases of wheat in Georgia and South Carolina, where wheat cannot be stored safely for extended periods.

Eligible wheat will be wheat produced in the continental U.S. in 1949, grading U.S. No. 3 or better, or grading U.S. No. 4 or No. 5 solely on the factor of test weight.

Mr. Roberts pointed out that the price-support program looks out for the interests of consumers as well as of producers, since it is designed to provide adequate supplies of wheat and to establish a farm floor price. Loans will make funds immediately available to producers who place wheat in storage for marketing later; purchase agreements assure producers who are not in need of immediate cash that they may sell their wheat at the price-support level at a later date.

Wheat price-support programs have been operated by the Department of Agriculture for the past 11 years and have covered, through loans and purchase agreements, a total of more than 2 billion bushels of wheat. The highest amount of wheat ever placed under loan was around 408 million bushels in 1942. In 1948, approximately 251 million bushels of wheat were placed under loan and 113 million bushels under purchase agreements, a total of 364 million bushels.

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ALL ONE PROGRAM - "Price supports, production adjustments, when they are needed, and conservation are all part of one program," said Alvin V. McCormack, Director of the Agricultural Conservation Programs Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, at recent meetings of committeemen. "One of the greatest values of the farm program is its flexibility -- it can be used to help farmers make needed adjustments to fit the requirements of the country for farm products. We have just been through a period of upward adjustments. Farmers shifted during the war to crops badly needed -- now it may be necessary to shift some of the land from these crops to other uses."

Price supports are helping farmers to make these shifts, but Mr. McCormack pointed out that prices should only be supported for the quantities of farm products actually needed. Price supports without production adjustments to fit demand could result in burdensome surpluses.

Acreage allotments and marketing quotas, when needed, can be used by farmers to keep from producing more than is required.

Many people believe that when acreage allotments are used farmers should plant within all of them to be eligible for price support. For a farmer to shift from one crop to another which is in plentiful supply, could result in over-production which would hurt the other farmers who usually grow that crop, build up surpluses and cost the Government too much money for price support.

This leads to the thought that the land not used for the allotment crops should, in the interest of both farmers and the Nation, be put into the production of crops in short supply and especially to conserving uses. Grass and hay which will help build up our depleted livestock numbers, as well as take care of the land are the best things for farmers to turn to. Much land not needed for crops should be in permanent cover or trees.

In closing, Mr. McCormack stressed the relation of conservation to the adjustment programs and pointed out the opportunity farmers now have to build up their soil, and at the same time more nearly produce in line with consumer needs.

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PRICE SUPPORTS AND THE CONSUMER - Farm price supports benefit consumers as well as farmers says _____, chairman of the _____ county Agricultural Conservation Committee. He lists three essential points to support his contention.

Price supports generally are not over 90 percent of parity -- 10 percent below an "even break."

With the assurance of price supports a farmer can continue to produce abundantly. And abundance, not scarcity, tends to keep prices from going too high.

The protection of price supports make possible a soil and water conservation program that helps to guard against erosion, depletion and waste of soil and water, assuring sustained production.

The concentration of population in cities is possible only as farmers are able to produce food in excess of their own needs and the needs of their families, he explains. Conservation helps make possible the continued production of food in excess of the farmer's own needs.

Extremely low prices first stimulate increased production as farmers struggle to meet fixed costs, but this continues, he points out, only until the farmer goes broke. Then the consumer in the city loses both the production of the farm and the farmer as a purchaser of the goods which city people have to sell.

On the not infrequent tendency to blame farmers for high consumer prices, the chairman points out that this is often an easy method of answering a complicated question. Actually, he explains, if a farmer gave away his wheat, a 16-cent loaf of bread still would cost the consumer 14 cents.

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WHEAT AGREEMENT MEANS STABILIZED FOREIGN MARKET - The international wheat agreement just concluded by the United States and other nations will be of great benefit to the farmers of this country, Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan recently stated. There are three basic reasons why this is so:

1. The agreement will stabilize our foreign market for wheat, guaranteeing a

market for 167.5 million bushels a year. Including wheat for occupied areas in Germany and Japan, this means an outlet for well over 300 million bushels of wheat a year--about as much as we can guarantee to deliver over a 4-year period.

2. The agreement will in effect put a floor under the foreign price for much of the U. S. export wheat, thus reducing the cost of the program to support the domestic price of wheat--a program aimed at assuring an abundance of food and fiber to our consumers without penalizing farmers for such production.
3. If put into operation, the agreement will set a pattern of international co-operation in solving agricultural problems which can be carried over to other commodities. International cooperation will be substituted for economic warfare.

Before it becomes effective, the international wheat agreement must be signed by the governments of the 42 nations which participated in drawing it up. The agreement provides for total exports of 456 million bushels during each of the next 4 years by the five exporting nations. The maximum price is \$1.80 per bushel; the floor price begins at \$1.50 for the first year and decreases 10 cents each year.

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SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM REACHES NEW PEAK - About 7 million children in 43,000 schools are now enjoying the benefits of the National School Lunch Program. The Federal appropriation for the School Lunch Program for the fiscal year ending next June is \$75,000,000. Legislation is now under consideration which will provide a larger amount of assistance for the fiscal year beginning July 1. More than 200,000,000 pounds of surplus agricultural commodities were distributed to schools last year. In view of the prospective surplus of many agricultural products this year, larger quantities of food will be consumed through this worthy enterprise.

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BALANCED PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION - That it may be necessary for the Secretary of Agriculture to proclaim acreage allotments and submit marketing quota referendums to the vote of farmers on a number of major crops next year is an indication that our food production capacity is being maintained, says W. Leslie Martin, Chairman of the New Mexico Production and Marketing Administration Committee.

Instead of the population outrunning the ability of the land to produce, farmers still have an opportunity to shift some of their land to uses that will build the soil for future production.

There is no conflict, the chairman points out, between supporting prices, setting allotments which call for a reduction in acreages, and also assisting farmers to carry out conservation measures. These are all elements of a necessary and desirable national program.

The primary objective is to make sure there is enough to eat -- and wear -- now and in the future. To do this it has been found necessary to protect the farmer from ruinous prices as well as to protect the land from wasteful farming.

With nearly 6 million farms and all the hazards of weather, disease, insects on the one hand and the introduction of improved varieties and better farming methods on the other, it is necessary to make national adjustments in production from time to time. Such adjustment is the only way to prevent waste of national soil resources in producing unneeded surplus crops.

To make sure there is enough -- now and in the future -- the soil must be protected from erosion and deterioration. This can be done only if the farmer is protected from the bankruptcy which in the past has resulted from over-abundant production and no price protection.

With bins filling up and production on a number of crops moving out ahead of consumer needs, the farmers of this country have a golden opportunity to catch up on needed conservation on the land that is taken out of surplus crops, the chairman points out. This will be good for the farm and the farmer but it will be even better for the consumer and the Nation as a whole. An effective national effort to put this land to some conservation use will increase the Nation's potential food strength.

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WHAT CROPS WHEN BINS ARE FULL? - When farmers are in trouble with excess production of one cash crop the tendency is to shift to another cash crop which results in trouble for that crop too, says _____, chairman of the _____ county Agricultural Conservation Committee.

Mr. _____ called attention to recent crop reports on prospective plantings for 1949. This survey shows practically no increase in soil conserving crops such as hay and pasture. Rather in a number of corn-producing States the acreages to be taken out of corn appears to be going into wheat and oats.

Even though the carryover of corn October 1, 1949 may exceed 700 million bushels, there is little indication that the total acreage in corn will be reduced

in 1949. And, though wheat bins are filling up with an expected carryover of 300 million bushels July 1, 1949, the expected acreage of wheat has increased from 71,850,000 acres in 1948 to 81,670,000 acres for 1949.

This clearly indicates, the chairman said, the necessity of a national program so that the adjustments made in one area do not nullify the adjustments made in another.

To protect the soil and the farmer's income too, Mr. _____ states, it may soon be necessary to set up allotments and vote on marketing quotas on a number of crops.

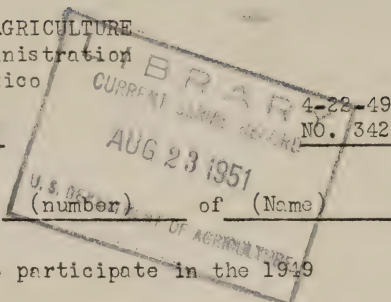
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(NUMBER) FARMERS SIGN UP IN 1949 ACP - Already (number) of (Name)

county's (number) farmers have signed up to participate in the 1949 Agricultural Conservation Program, according to _____ chairman of the county Agricultural Conservation Committee.

County farmers have only until May 1 to sign up in the 1949 program. The closing date for sign-up is necessary, the chairman explains, to make it possible to determine the assistance available for the various conservation practices planned. Generally, this assistance is about 50 percent of the out-of-pocket cost of the individual practice. The total assistance available for _____ county for this year is \$ _____, and the total for practices planned must be kept within this amount.

Mr. _____ explains that the sign-up is more than just getting a farmer's name on the dotted line. It includes filling out a farm plan on which the farmer indicates the conservation practices he intends to carry out during the year.

Each farmer is encouraged to plan his conservation program to meet the most urgent conservation needs. Often a combination of practices is necessary. Where a terrace is planned, requirements often include provisions for disposal of excess water.

The use of lime and phosphate is intended as a means of obtaining a better growth of grasses and legumes. The real conservation comes from the ability of these plants to hold the soil and restore organic matter.

Mr. _____ urges farmers who intend to participate in the program and who have not signed up to do so just as soon as possible.

ARE FARMERS GETTING RICH? - Although almost everyone knows of farmers who have "made money" during the past 8 or 10 years, most farmers have not been "doing as well" as the people in town or city.

_____, chairman of the _____ county Agricultural Conservation Committee, backs up this statement with the fact that the average net income of farm people in 1948 from all sources was only \$909 per capita, including the value of home-produced food and income from non-farm sources. This compares with the non-farm average of \$1,569.

Mr. _____ said that consumers are often misled by the prices they have to pay for groceries and other commodities produced on the farm, or made from raw materials produced on the farm. Too often, they are not aware of the prices actually received by farmers.

According to Mr. _____, figures show that for the wool in a \$50 suit, the farmer received about \$5.70; for \$10 worth of meat, the farmer received about \$5.10; for the tobacco in a 20 cent pack of cigarettes, the farmer received about 2-2/5 cents; for the wheat in a 14½ cent loaf of bread, the farmer received about 3 cents. And if the farmer had given away the hide for a \$10 pair of shoes, they would still cost \$8.63.

Too often, Mr. _____ said, this spread between what the farmer gets and what the consumer pays and the difference between farm and non-farm incomes are over-looked when farm programs and price-support measures are being discussed.

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TOTAL CROP ALLOTMENTS SUGGESTED - Now that acreage allotments and marketing quotas seem likely on a number of major crops in 1950, the problem is one of keeping acreages taken out of allotment crops from piling up surpluses of other farm commodities.

According to _____, chairman of the _____ county Agricultural Conservation Committee, this is one of the big problems -- if not the biggest -- facing farmers of this country today. As surpluses of one crop pile up there will be a tendency -- if past experience can be used as a guide -- to shift production to other cash crops. This, in one year, may mean surpluses and ruinous prices for these commodities.

Mr. _____ said that it has been suggested that there be a total allotment on the farm to cover all these crops. This would mean that in addition to the allotments on individual crops there would be a total farm allotment that would cover all cash crops, or crops that may cause marketing troubles. To be eligible for price supports, the farmer would have to be within this total allotment as well as all the allotments for individual crops.

On a farm where a farmer may have anormal acreage of 60 acres of wheat, 30 acres of corn, and 10 acres of potatoes, he may have individual crop allotments of 50 acres of wheat, 25 acres of corn, and 5 acres of potatoes. But he may have 20 acres in other cash crops, which if increased, would help to build up surpluses.

The idea suggested would be to set up an over-all allotment as well as allotments for individual cash crops. He would have to be within the individual crop allotment and the total allotment to be eligible for price supports on any crop.

The suggested proposal would help farmers to work together instead of against each other, the chairman said. And as to what to do with the land taken out of these cash crops, he suggested that there is room for expansion of grass and legume crops both to increase livestock production and to conserve the soil.

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DON'T FORGET THE WIND - Are you preparing your land to blow away? asks W. Leslie Martin, chairman of the New Mexico Production and Marketing Administration Committee.

The chairman says that there are many indications that farmers have forgotten the "dust bowls" and what can happen to soil when the humus and clods are all worked out of it. Good crops and high prices have led many farmers to take daring chances with the topsoil of millions of acres.

The farmers of New Mexico are aware of the danger that comes from plowing up too much sod and cropping the land year after year without a return to a crop that will build up the humus. The wheat land taken out of brush and grass for a year or two is held together by the roots and vegetation that has been plowed under. But year after year of cropping, especially if the straw is burned, leaves the soil broken up into fine particles.

As long as the soil is protected by a growing crop it may be reasonably safe but after it is plowed or worked down with harrows or weeders, it becomes a "blow hazard" which threatens not only the land in this condition but adjoining land as well.

Mr. Martin points out that the 1949 Agricultural Conservation Program provides assistance to farmers for practices which protect the land against blowing.

Practices designed to give effective protection against wind erosion include: Field strip cropping, working crop residues into the surface layer of the soil, instead of turning them under, subsoiling to bring up clods that will hold the soil, establishing a perennial vegetative cover such as crested wheatgrass, clover, or alfalfa, and protecting the land with a surface mulch.

Mr. Martin warned that dry weather and winds may come any time and that the best way to avoid that "gone with the wind" regret is to keep the land protected with conservation practices which tie down the soil.

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WESTERN STATES HOLD IRRIGATION AND RANGE CONFERENCE - One way to get more irrigation water for our Western land is to make better use of the water we now have, said A. D. Woofter, Member of the New Mexico Production and Marketing Administration Committee, who returned this week from attending an 11-State PMA Conference on irrigation and range conservation.

The two-day conference was held in Phoenix, Arizona, April 26 and 27, 1949. States represented at the conference were Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Hoy C. Connelley, ACP Specialist and Santiago Marquez and Thomas R. Roberts, Members of the State Committee also attended the conference.

Mr. Woofter said the conference had to do with reviewing the effectiveness of irrigation and range conservation practices now in use and making recommendations for practices to be included in the 1950 Agricultural Conservation Program.

It was brought out at the meeting that irrigation practices have been included in the Program for only a few years but their effectiveness in conserving soil and water have been outstanding. By lining ditches, the supply of water reaching the farm often has been doubled. Land-leveling has proved effective in preventing "ponding" in the low places and "burning" on the ridges. Flumes, check dams, and weirs are helping to control erosion as well as to insure more efficient use of limited supplies of irrigation water.

Many of the range conservation practices discussed at the conference had to do with protecting watersheds which are the source of irrigation water. It was pointed out that proper stocking of the private range as well as adequate watering places and reseeding where needed have made the Nation's supply of meat and wool more secure.

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SEEDING FOR SECURITY - As land is taken out of wheat, corn, cotton, and other surplus crops, it should be seeded to security crops -- crops that will hold the soil and build reserves for future production -- according to _____, chairman of the _____ county Agricultural Conservation Committee.

With the rest of the country cooperating with the farmer by providing a program to support prices on his crops, the chairman points out that "the farmer has an obligation to the country to protect and conserve the land taken out of surplus production.

"It has been estimated that more than 20 million acres may have to be diverted from the so-called 'cash crops' in the years immediately ahead. Nearly all of this should be seeded to such soil conserving crops as grass and alfalfa and clover. But, of course, the problem there will be one of having enough seed."

Mr. _____ said it is not too early for all farmers to make plans for increasing the harvest of grass and legume seed this year. Certainly they will be needed next year -- and the years ahead -- not only for normal seeding but for the increased seeding of the acres diverted from cash crops.

He points out that it is just good business and good sense to avoid using up soil fertility, labor, and machinery in turning out crops for which there is no market -- or at prices so low that farmers go broke.

To shift the use of land from one cash crop to another merely results in additional surpluses. The markets for the regular growers would be ruined and the new growers would gain little if anything. To meet this problem it may be necessary to establish acreage allotments for several of the major crops.

The present farm program, the chairman explains, is essentially a means to balance production and to add to the national food security by seeding the land taken out of surplus crops to soil conserving grasses and legumes.

With the rest of the country cooperating with the Government in providing a program of support prices on its crops, the chairman points out that "the Government has an obligation to the consumer to protect and conserve the food taken out of surplus crops."

It has been estimated that more than 10 million acres may have to be diverted from the so-called "cash crops" in the years immediately ahead. Nearly all of this should be needed to keep well conserving crops at times and difficult and almost, but of course, the problem there will be one of finding enough money.

Mr. _____ said it is not too early for all farmers to make plans for increasing the network of Government and Federal seed and fertilizer. Certainly they will be needed next year -- and the years ahead -- not only for normal conditions but for the increased needings of the crops diverted from cash crops.

He points out that it is just good business and good sense to begin saving up well fertilized, labor, and machinery in farming and crops for which there is no sure market -- or at least as low that farmers to produce.

To shift the use of land from one cash crop to another would result in little or no surplus. The market for the present program would be ruined and the new program would risk little or nothing. In view of this problem it may be necessary to establish a new program for surplus of the cash crops.

The present farm program, the chairman explains, is essentially a means to increase production and to add to the national food security by sending the land taken out of surplus crops to well conserving farmers and farmers.